

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. The following remarks are responsive to the Office Action of October 22, 2003.

Claims 1 and 139 have been amended such that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 will be obviated. The amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited prior art as it includes "means for allowing the user to modify the processing rule" (Claim 1). For example, the specification states that one embodiment of the present invention provides the ability to "add another rule; the ability to delete the selected rule, the ability to copy a rule for later change, and the ability to make each rule currently active or not active" (Page 83, lines 21-25).

Nowhere in the cited prior art is there a teaching or suggestion of providing a user with the capability to modify a processing rule. Indeed, cited prior art such as Miner (U.S Patent No. 5,652,789) merely teaches that a user may select a preference provided by the system. "When an incoming call arrives for a given subscriber there are a number of ways in which the assistant might handle the call, depending on the preferences which the subscriber has previously selected. The assistant might directly forward the call to a telephone on the subscriber's desk phone, it might simply offer to take a message from the incoming caller, or it might attempt to locate the subscriber and offer to connect him to incoming call once he is located. In handling the call, the answer call task first checks the subscriber's status to determine which preference he has selected" (Miner, Col. 32, lines 54-64).

Therefore, Miner only teaches that a user is able to select a preference provided by the system. This is in contrast to the present invention that discloses the capability to modify a processing rule. Because the prior art does not teach each and every feature of the present claim, therefore, claim 1 is patentable. Claims 4-7, 17-30, 36, 139, 142-157, 270-273 and 283-286 depend from independent claim 1; hence, they too are patentable.

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The current amendments are supported by the specification as filed. Accordingly, no new matter is added. Claims 140, 141 and 158 are canceled. The Examiner is thanked for a careful review of the claims.

If there are any additional charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666. If a telephone interview would in any way expedite the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Jaina Chua at (408) 947-8200 ext. 213.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 22, 2004

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